

Docket 1999CH023  
Serial No. 10/088,434  
Group 1751

Amendments to the Claims:

Please amend the claims as follows:

1. (previously presented) Process for the production of dyed oxide layers on aluminium or aluminium alloys by dyeing in an aqueous dyebath, rinsing with water and sealing, where the dyeing is carried out using at least one water-soluble anionic dye (A) which possesses at least one substituent and/or component combination with a ligand character that is capable of forming a nickel complex with nickel ions, and the sealing is carried out by cold sealing with at least one sealing agent (B) containing nickel ions  $Ni^{2+}$  and fluoride ions  $F^-$ .
2. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, where, for the sealing, a two-step sealing is carried out, in which, in the first step, cold sealing is carried out with at least one sealing agent (B), and in the second step, hot secondary sealing is carried out with water.
3. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, where the dyes (A) are dyes with which dyeings are produced on the oxide layers whose light fastness, determined in accordance with ISO specification No. 105 B02 (USA), after hot-sealing with water or with a nickel compound, corresponds to a light fastness grade of below 7.
4. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, where the dyes (A) are sulfo group-containing dyes which contain at least one substituent and/or component combination with a ligand character capable of forming a labile nickel complex with nickel ions,
5. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, where the dyes (A)

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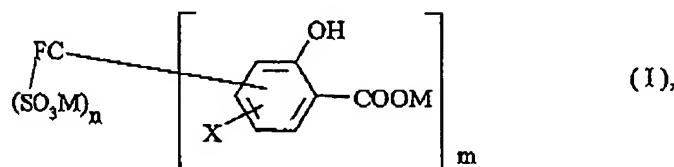
are sulfo group-containing dyes which contain at least one salicylic acid group, optionally in salt form, or are copper complexes which contain nitrogen atoms as ring members of a heterocyclic ring, only some or none of which participate in the copper complex formation.

6. (previously presented) Process according to Claim 1, where (B) is employed in the form of (B)-containing sealing agent preparation (B<sub>P</sub>).
7. (previously presented) The oxide layers dyed by the process according to Claim 1.
8. (canceled)
9. (previously presented) Dyed oxide layers according to Claim 7 with a light fastness corresponding to a light fastness grade, in accordance with ISO specification No. 105 B02 (USA), which is at least two grades higher than an otherwise identical dyeing which, however, has been hot-sealed with water.
10. (previously presented) Dyed oxide layers according to Claim 9 with a light fastness corresponding to a light fastness grade, in accordance with ISO specification No. 105 B02 (USA), of  $\geq 8$ .

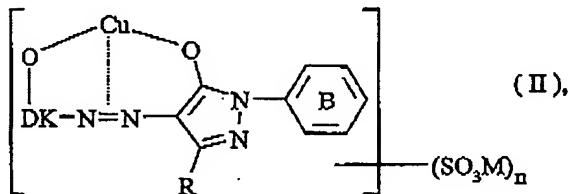
Please add new claims 11 through 14 as follows:

11. (new) Dyed oxide layers according to Claim 9 with a light fastness corresponding to a light fastness grade, in accordance with ISO specification No. 105 B02 (USA), of  $\geq 7$ .
12. (new) Process according to Claim 3, where the dyes (A) are the dyes of the general formulae:

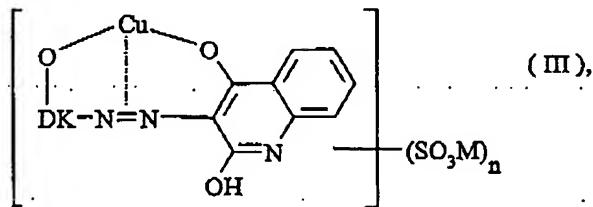
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in which X denotes hydrogen or a bond to FC,  
 m denotes 1 or 2,  
 n denotes a number from 1 to twice the total number of aromatic rings in the molecule,  
 M denotes hydrogen or a non-chromophoric cation  
 and FC denotes the  $(m+n)$ -valent residual chromophoric part of the dye,



in which R denotes  $C_{1-4}$ -alkyl,  
 M denotes hydrogen or a non-chromophoric cation,  
 n denotes a number from 1 to twice the total number of aromatic rings in the molecule,  
 and DK denotes the radical of a diazo component,  
 and the ring B may optionally be further substituted, for example with  $C_{1-4}$ -alkyl,  
 and



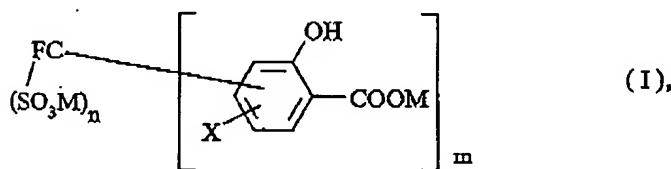
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in which M denotes hydrogen or a non-chromophoric cation,

n denotes a number from 1 to twice the total number of aromatic rings in the molecule

and DK denotes the radical of a diazo component.

13. (new) Process according to Claim 4, where the dyes (A) are the dyes of the general formulae:



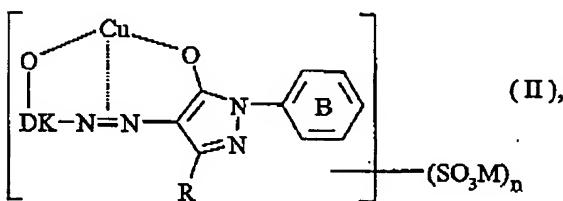
in which X denotes hydrogen or a bond to FC,

m denotes 1 or 2,

n denotes a number from 1 to twice the total number of aromatic rings in the molecule,

M denotes hydrogen or a non-chromophoric cation

and FC denotes the (m+n)-valent residual chromophoric part of the dye,



in which R denotes C<sub>1-4</sub>-alkyl,

M denotes hydrogen or a non-chromophoric cation,

n denotes a number from 1 to twice the total number of aromatic rings in the

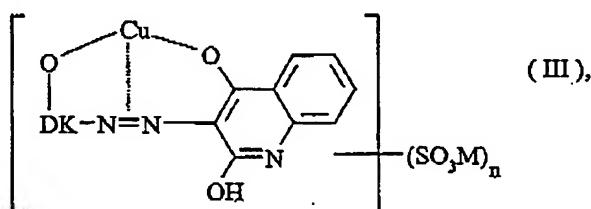
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molecule,

and DK denotes the radical of a diazo component,

and the ring B may optionally be further substituted, for example with C<sub>1-4</sub>-alkyl,

and



in which M denotes hydrogen or a non-chromophoric cation,

n denotes a number from 1 to twice the total number of aromatic rings in the molecule

and DK denotes the radical of a diazo component.

14. (new) Process according to Claim 5 wherein the sulpho group containing copper complexes are copper phthalocyanine complexes or 1:1 copper complexes of monoazo dyes which contain a coupling component from the oxyquinoline or pyrazolone series.